

**Saint Paul Planning Commission
City Hall Conference Center
15 Kellogg Boulevard West**

Minutes April 20, 2007

A meeting of the Planning Commission of the City of Saint Paul was held Friday, April 20 2007, at 8:30 a.m. in the Conference Center of City Hall.

Commissioners Present: Mmes. Donnelly-Cohen, Faricy, McCall, Morton, Smitten, Wenc; and Messrs. Alton, Barrera, Commers, Cudahy, Goodlow, Gordon, Johnson, Kramer, Rosemark, and Spaulding.

Commissioners Absent: Mmes. *Lu, *Porter, and Messrs. *Bellus, Margulies, *Nelson
*Excused

Also Present: Larry Soderholm, Planning Administrator; Peter Warner, Assistant City Attorney; Larry Zangs and Tom Beach, Department of Safety and Inspections; Al Torstenson, Patricia James, Jessica Rosenfeld, Shawntera Hardy, Merritt Clapp-Smith, Yang Zhang, Sara Zorn, Andrew Jacobson, and Sonja Butler, Department of Planning and Economic Development staff.

I. Swearing in of the New Commissioner

A new Saint Paul Planning Commission member, Ms. Barbara Wenc, was sworn in by Shari Moore, City Clerk.

II. Approval of minutes March 20, 2007.

MOTION: *Commissioner Donnelly-Cohen moved approval of the minutes of March 20, 2007. Commissioner Rosemark seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

III. Chair's Announcements

Chair Alton announced that the Public Art Saint Paul has been charged by the City Council with developing public art policies for the City. They have established a process that includes a core drafting team, a Community Advisory Task Force, and arts development advisors. They have asked for a representative from the Planning Commission to participate in the Community Advisory Task Force. Parts of the public art policy report will probably be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. Chair Alton asked commission members to contact Larry Soderholm or him if they would like to participate in the development of public art policy. He passed around a description of the charge from the City Council and process that is getting underway.

III. Planning Administrator's Announcements

Larry Soderholm reported on planning-related business at the City Council for last week and their agenda for next week. Mr. Soderholm mentioned that Commissioner Jon Commers will speak about trends and issues relating to property taxes, particularly for commercial property in the Central Corridor, at a bag lunch meeting on April 25th at the University UNITED offices.

Commissioner Commers stated that the County Assessor Steve Baker is also going to join him and that it will be an open discussion.

IV. Zoning Committee

OLD BUSINESS

#07-043-737 Holman Field Subdrain Improvements - Conditional Use permit for storm sewer work in the floodway and variances of setback from ordinary high water level, development on slopes greater than 12%, and rehabilitation of slopes greater than 18%. 644 Bayfield Street. (Patricia James, 651/266-6639)

Commissioner Morton reported that resolution for the Holman Field Subdrain Improvements needed further clarification and could be ready for adoption in two weeks.

#07-043-921 Holman Field Subdrain Improvements – Modification of approved site plan for Holman Field Drainage improvements. 644 Bayfield Street. (Tom Beach, 651/266-9086)

Commissioner Morton reported that resolution for the Holman Field Subdrain Improvements needed further clarification and could be ready for adoption in two weeks.

#07-027-041 Firstborne Properties – Rezoning from R4 (One-Family Residential) to B2 Community Business), 1337 Pascal Street N, SW corner of Bison Avenue. (Allan Torstenson, 651/266-6579)

MOTION: *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to deny the rezoning. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

NEW BUSINESS

#07-049-660 Nicole Hamel – Change of Nonconforming Use from accounting office to chiropractic clinic. 50 Cretin Avenue S, SE corner at Grand. (Sarah Zorn, 651/266-6570)

MOTION: *Commissioner Morton moved the Zoning Committee's recommendation to approve the change of nonconforming use. The motion carried on a 17-0 vote with 1 abstention (Alton).*

Amendment to Zoning Code regarding outdoor sales of fireworks – Discussion of draft text amendment regarding outdoor sales of consumer fireworks as requested by City Council Resolution 06-910. (Patricia James, 651/266-6639)

Commissioner Morton reported that the Zoning Committee reviewed the amendment to the zoning code, amended some of the language, and directed staff to set a public hearing date.

Revisions to Duplex-Triplex conversion Guidelines – Discussion of proposed changes to guidelines, bringing them into conformance with 2004 zoning code changes and updating other language. (*Patricia James, 651/266-6639*)

Commissioner Morton reported that the Zoning Committee discussed the draft and suggested further revisions.

#07-056-563 Victoria Park Master Plan – Modification of the Victoria Park Master Plan. 88x Otto Avenue, area bounded by Otto Avenue, West 7th Street, Kay Street, and Mercer Street. (*Larry Soderholm, 651/266-6575*)

Larry Soderholm explained that the City received a request to modify the Victoria Park Master Plan from Sholom Community Alliance and Brighton Victoria Park LLC. They requested that one parcel be switched from "townhomes" to "senior living apartments". The area is zoned TN3(M) and the Master Plan governs what can be built. The zoning code provides for major modifications, which can be approved by the Planning Commission and the City Council, and minor modifications, which can be approved by the Planning Administrator. As Planning Administrator, Mr. Soderholm consulted with the Zoning Committee to see if they objected to his making a decision on the request. The committee voted that it had no objection to an administrative action consistent with the code. The committee did not consider the substance of the request because an administrative decision would be subject to an appeal to the Planning Commission. In that case the Zoning Committee would hold a public hearing and would need to be able to weigh the facts impartially. Mr. Soderholm said that a few days after the Zoning Committee's discussion, he had, in fact, approved the modification of the Victoria Park Master Plan. No action is needed by the Planning Commission today, and no action will be needed on this case unless someone files an appeal.

He added that the staff and Commission need to be thoughtful and conscientious in deciding this request because it is the first request the City has received for modification of an approved TN master plan. Our procedures for this case are setting a precedent. His primary concern is that administrative decisions should be made in a public way, not as one-on-one agreements made at a desk in PED.

V. Comprehensive Planning Committee

Update from Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan Task Force

PED staff Jess Rosenfeld and Commissioner Steve Gordon made a progress report on the Parks and Recreation chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. The Parks Plan Task Force is meeting monthly to revise a generally strong chapter of the adopted Comprehensive Plan. The big issues that will need to be addressed in the plan include increasing demand for park services in a climate of decreasing resources and increasing desires for sustainability and active, healthy living. The Task Force has had several panel discussions so far, which have led to a few emergent policies: (1) increased emphasis on volunteerism; (2) application of CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principles and technology to parks and recreation design; (3) improved

data collection, especially on public safety incidents; and (4) increased responsiveness to needs of a diverse population.

Commissioner Donnelly-Cohen announced that the Comprehensive Planning Committee will meet on May 1, 2007, on the National Great River Park Plan and then will have a joint meeting with the former Mississippi River Critical Area Task Force on May 15, 2007, at 4:00 p.m. in City Hall, Room 41.

VI. Neighborhood and Current Planning Committee

Como (District 10) Area Plan Summary – Set a public hearing date for May 18, 2007.
(Yang Zhang, 651/266-6659).

MOTION: *Commissioner McCall moved to set a public hearing for the Como (District 10) Area Plan Summary on May 18, 2007. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

Railroad Island Area Plan Summary – Set a public hearing date for May 18, 2007.
(Yang Zhang, 651/266-6659)

MOTION: *Commissioner McCall moved to set a public hearing for the Railroad Island Area Plan Summary on May 18, 2007. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

Thomas-Dale (District 7) Area Plan Summary – Resolution approving plan.
(Shawntera Hardy, 651/266-6562)

MOTION: *Commissioner McCall moved to approve the resolution for the Thomas-Dale (District 7) Plan Summary recommending that the City Council adopt it as an addendum to the Comprehensive Plan..*

Larry Soderholm noticed that the resolution didn't have a clause decertifying the previous plans for the area, which is found in the resolutions for the Snelling Hamline and Highland Park Plans. Shawntera Hardy said two existing plans would be replaced—the Thomas-Dale District Plan of 1983 and the Thomas-Dale Small Area Plan of 1997.

Commissioner McCall amended the resolution to add the clause, “replacing the previous Thomas-Dale District Plan adopted in 1983 and the Thomas-Dale Small Area Plan adopted in 1997.” The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

Snelling-Hamline (District 13) Area Plan Summary – Resolution approving plan.
(Merritt Clapp-Smith, 651/266-6547)

MOTION: *Commissioner McCall moved to approve the resolution for the Snelling Hamline Plan Summary recommending that the City Council adopt it as an addendum to the Comprehensive Plan. The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.*

Highland Park (District 15) Area Plan Summary - Resolution approving plan.
(Merritt Clapp-Smith, 651/266-6547)

MOTION: *Commissioner McCall moved to approve the resolution for the Highland Park (District 15) Plan Summary recommending that the City Council adopt it as an addendum to the Comprehensive Plan.*

Commissioner Gordon wanted the record to reflect that the policy about bicycle paths and/or lanes along Mississippi River Blvd. is an issue that affects the citywide trail system. He was concerned with the language in the plan as submitted by the district council because of its implication that almost everyone in the community opposes adding any new bicycle lanes. He was satisfied with the change before the Commission today, which makes the simple, factual statement that the Highland District Council opposes adding new bicycle lanes on the Mississippi River Blvd. The wording is correct that bicycle improvements should be made that are consistent with the City's Transportation Plan.

The motion carried unanimously on a voice vote.

VII. Communications Committee

None

VIII. Task Force Reports

Commissioner Smitten announced that both the University Avenue and Capitol/Downtown Central Corridor Task Forces will meet on Monday, April 23, 2007, at 4:30 p.m. at MPR where the consultants will present the final draft of the task force's *Central Corridor Development Strategy* at the UBS forum where it will be recorded for a broadcast.

Commissioner Johnson announced the Water Comp Plan Task Force had its second meeting last week at the Saint Paul Water Treatment Plant and discussed the part of the plan dealing with the municipal water supply. The meetings are moving around to the various agencies that work on water issues. Next fall the task force will meet at the Pig's Eye Waste Treatment Plant.

Commissioner Gordon reported that the STAR Board has begun orientation for this year's large loan and grant cycle. Applications are due in June. There will be a bus tour on July 11th, interviews on July 25th and ranking on August 8th.

Commissioner Faricy reported on the Ford Site Planning Task Force. At the last meeting the task force worked in small groups to consider various development scenarios outlined by the consultants. The next meeting is May 7th at the Lumen Christi Catholic Church and on May 8th they are having a public workshop.

Allan Torstenson reported that the Como Avenue Task Force did the "block exercise" led by the Center for Neighborhoods at its last meeting. They did alternative designs for three sites and it was fun and very useful to the small area planning process.

IX. Old Business

None

X. New Business

None

XI. Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 9:38 a.m.

Recorded and prepared by
Sonja Butler, Planning Commission Secretary
Planning and Economic Development Department,
City of Saint Paul

Respectfully submitted,

Approved _____
(Date)

Larry Soderholm, AICP
Planning Administrator

Marilyn Porter
Secretary of the Planning Commission

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